Board proposes changes in membership structure, dues increase

By Michael John Jaeger
WSO President

Under WSO’s bylaws, dues for members “shall be in such amount as shall from time to time be recommended by the Board of Directors and confirmed by the membership.”

The WSO Board is requesting its members to consider proposed changes to membership classes and dues during our Annual Meeting on Saturday June 17 at this year’s 78th annual convention in Carter. This article provides the 30-day notice to members required under WSO’s bylaws.

If approved at the Annual Meeting, the changes would be effective for 2018.

While WSO has historically increased its dues about every 5 years, it has been 16 years since the last increase.

What follows is an overview of the proposed changes, including the board's reasoning. The membership levels and costs used in the board’s review are from 2015, the most recent full year for which information was available when our analysis was undertaken.

Current Revenue Target

The target expenses WSO tries to cover with basic membership dues, as specified in WSO’s Policies and Procedures document, consists of the following:

The Passenger Pigeon, except for color printing costs, $18,289

"Celebrating Citizen Science"

WSO Convention registration package begins on Page 9; speaker line-up on Page 5.

New team seeks support for the birds at Honey Creek

WSO’s annual Honey Creek Birdathon/Bandathon is a significant source of funds to meet our yearly expenses to maintain our recently expanded nature preserve in the globally significant Baraboo Hills.

This is a transition year for the birdathon as Jesse Peterson, former WSO president and membership chair, hands over leadership of the birdathon to Maggie Stewart and Maia Persche. Stewart will coordinate the fundraising aspects, while Persche will lead the Sunday morning walk up the valley.

Members are invited to join Prof. Anna Pidgeon’s bandathon on Saturday morning, May 13, and for the birdathon and valley hike at 8 a.m. on Sunday May 14.

Members also are strongly encouraged to support the Society’s sole major fundraising event with their donation by taking advantage of the pledge or donation card enclosed in this issue of The Badger Birder.

Here’s a little more about our new birdathon team:

Stewart grew up in South Milwaukee. Her interest in birds sparked during the many family camping and canoeing trips. It wasn’t until her undergraduate career that she began considering herself a “birder,” after taking ornithology.

After finishing her bachelor’s degree in wildlife ecology at UW-Madison, Stewart went on to get a master’s in environmental conservation through UW-Madison’s Nelson Institute.

Stewart has worked many part-time and summer positions since she started her undergrad, from a visitor experience associate at the Harley Davison Museum in Milwaukee to conservation planning work at the International Crane Foundation for her master’s project. One of her favorite activities was joining WSO’s Conservation Committee and learning more about the work the Society does.

After finishing her master’s degree, Stewart began working for the Department of Natural Resources as an assistant big-game ecologist, supporting the deer and large carnivore programs. She enjoys that weekends no longer mean homework but now allow for more birding opportunities. Stewart has many favorite birds but the one she most enjoys spotting is the American Bittern.

Persche grew up in Baraboo and has spent many days exploring the Baraboo Range. Her family has been involved in conservation efforts for as long as she can remember, and birding has always been a large part of her life. During college, she spent...
Egg shells: a nifty addition to bird-feeding

By LARRY MICHAEL

Okay, you just scrambled, poached, fried, hard boiled or whatever else you cooks do with eggs. Now I bet you think you are done with them. NOT!

Don’t even think about throwing those valuable egg shells in the garbage or compost. It is time to do a little recycling.

After a little work, you can provide a much needed and appreciated source of calcium grit to your wild bird friends. Adults, juvenile and younger birds are always in need of a calcium boost. There is no better way to reuse something that otherwise would just be put in the garbage.

**Step one:** Lightly wash (no soap please) to remove any remaining egg from inside. Then lightly dry with a paper towel. The shells must then be sterilized.

**Step two:** You can use either a regular oven or a microwave. Break shells into smaller pieces and place on a cookie sheet and bake in oven at 250 degrees for 10 minutes until dried but not browned. The shells will crumble easily when completely dried.

You can also place shells in a microwave safe plate or bowl and heat on “high” for 90 seconds to 3 minutes; 3 to 4 minutes for a dozen or more. Again the egg shells will crumble quite easily when completely dried.

Before you feed the shells to the birds, crumble them (the egg shells not the birds, silly) into smaller sizes. Large enough for the birds to pick up in their beaks, but small enough that they can swallow them. About the size of a black sunflower seed is about right.

The shells are now ready to feed your birds and help with their digestion. They can be presented to the birds the same way as any other bird seed. You also can scatter them on the ground, patio, platform, sidewalk or driveway.

If you want to know what birds are eating your calcium offerings, place shells in a location that you can watch from the comfort of your home.

So please think twice before you just throw out your unwanted egg shells. The birds will love you for it. And I would be interested in hearing what birds you have seen eating your calcium boosting offerings.

LARRY MICHAEL founded the Horicon Marsh Bird Club. This article is reprinted from the club’s newsletter, The Wing Beat. Larry can be contacted at lamichael@charter.net

Birding Digest

Help wanted:
1 BBS route vacancy

MARK KORDUCKI, the state’s Breeding Bird Survey coordinator, has just one route (out of 92) that he needs to fill for this year and beyond. The Pigeon Creek route is in Jackson County.

Please email korducki@earthlink.net if you are interested in taking it over.

The route needs to be run one time between May 27 and July 7. You need to have the ability to identify Wisconsin birds by song.

Oriole Count offers free feeders

This year will mark WSO’s third Great Wisconsin Oriole Count, an activity for schools and youth groups.

Participation is free, and the first six groups to register will receive a free oriole feeder, and all groups that submit count data will be eligible for a drawing for binoculars donated by Eagle Optics and other prizes for their group.

To register and receive count materials, email oriolecounnt@wsobirds.org

Kate’s Quotes

Naturalist Kate Redmond offers us a monthly selection of quotes on nature, conservation and life around us.

“There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature.”

—RACHEL CARSON, founder of the contemporary environmental movement

“Weeds are flowers too, once you get to know them.”

—A. A. MILNE, English humorist who wrote the tales of Winnie-the-Pooh
Scientists organize to tackle threats to state’s natural resources

Madison – A new organization, Wisconsin’s Green Fire: Voices for Conservation (WGF), has been formed in response to recent developments at the state and national level that threaten science-based practices and sound management of the state’s natural resources.

The organizers of WGF argue that Wisconsin’s tradition of dedicated stewardship of its land, waters and wildlife has been severely compromised and are seeking to reclaim the state’s tradition as a national leader in conservation.

Under the administration of Republican Gov. Scott Walker, budgets have been slashed for Wisconsin State Parks and public lands management, scientific research, the Wisconsin Natural Resources magazine and the Wisconsin Environmental Education Board.

Scientific information on climate change has been scrubbed from Department of Natural Resources communications, while restrictions on DNR staff have limited access to science at public hearings.

In response, a group of retired and active Wisconsin scientists with experience from a wide range of institutions — including the DNR, the University of Wisconsin, federal natural resource agencies, nonprofit environmental groups, research institutions and the private sector — have established Wisconsin’s Green Fire.

WGF is an independent, nonpartisan group. Its nearly 70 members represent wide experience in natural resource management, environmental law and policy, scientific research and education.

It aims to help local units of government, nonprofit organizations, media and decision makers get the scientific information they need to address local and regional issues.

The group also will be a source for those seeking experts who can and will take positions and bring scientific clarity and scrutiny to contentious and complicated environmental issues.

The group takes its name from Aldo Leopold’s essay “Thinking Like a Mountain.” “We decided to use Green Fire in our name to tie us to Wisconsin’s conservation hero, Aldo Leopold,” said WGF Coordinator Terry Daulton.

“Leopold’s land ethic relies on understanding that people are a part of the land, every species has importance, and human activities must be in harmony with nature. It also tells us, as citizens and as scientists, that we all share a responsibility for the land, for one another, and for future generations.”

For more information, contact Terry Daulton at 715-776-0081 or tdaulton@centurytel.net

6 Signature teams among 50 seeking your help to raise $75K in Great Wisconsin Birdathon

By DIANE PACKETT
Great Wisconsin Birdathon Coordinator

We’re excited to welcome at least 50 teams to this year’s Great Wisconsin Birdathon. At least a dozen brand new teams have signed up, including teams raising funds for organizations, Bird Cities and classrooms, with goals as modest as $50 and as high as $5,000.

Whether you’re a backyard birdwatcher or a 24-hour birding marathoner, the Great Wisconsin Birdathon will once again be an opportunity to give back to Wisconsin’s birds. This annual event, coordinated by the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin, raised more than $77,000 for Bird Protection Fund priority projects in 2016. The 2017 GWB campaign runs through June 15, with the goal of raising at least $75,000.

This year’s hard-working Signature Teams are a blend of old and new, giving some new groups a shot at the glory while some of the tried-and-true outfits again hope to lead the way in birding and fundraising. Here’s the 2017 Signature Team lineup:

**CUTRIGH’S OLD COOTS** (Carl Schwartz, Marilyn Bontly, Tom Uttech, Joan Sommer and Mike Wanger) — Last year’s top fundraisers have set an ambitious goal this year—$10,000! That’s dedication!

**THE FINCH GANG** (Karen Etter Hale, Marcus Brown, Clare and Matt Carlson, Eric Mosher, Sandy River, Brad Webb and Charlie Roberts) – Named for the famous Finch family of horse thieves, the gang has been one of our top fundraisers for several years.

**LAKE SUPERIOR eBIRDERS** (Ryan Brady, Nick Anich and Erik Bruhnke) - This year professional birding guide Erik joins Ryan and Nick in the North Woods.

**LOWER WISCONSIN SCAN DA AVIANS** (Barb Barzen, Jeb Barzen, Arlyne Johnson and Mike Hedemark) – This hardy team of Scandinavian descendants will scan the prime birding territory of the Lower Wisconsin Riverway.

**SECRETARY BIRDS** (Tom Prestby, Quentin Yoerger and Mark Korducki) – All record-keepers for WSO, they were last year’s top birders with 192 species! Can they break that record?

**WYBC TEEN BIRDERS** (Ryan Treves, Michael Gray, Ben Marn and Josh Collum) – The next generation of birders bring their considerable energy and talents to bear for bird conservation. They’re already over 80% of their fundraising goal!


The GWB is a partnership between the NRF, WSO, Wisconsin DNR, Bird City Wisconsin, Madison Audubon, Wisconsin Audubon Council and the Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative.

Among the Bird Protection Fund’s priority projects are the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas II, Bird City Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Bird Monitoring Program, Wisconsin Stopover Initiative, Wisconsin Kirtland’s Warbler Project, Whooping Crane Reintroduction Program, Important Bird Areas-Southern Forests and Greater Prairie Chicken programs, as well as an education program in the Osa Peninsula of Costa Rica.

Email Diane.Packett@wisconsin.gov or call 920-219-2587 for more information.
Prairie-Chickens vanishing as DNR works on developing a new management plan

By Peter Dunn
WSO Conservation Committee

It is spring and Greater Prairie-Chickens are once again booming in central Wisconsin. Each year since 1950 there has been a count of displaying males that is used to estimate the number of birds in the population. Since 2000, numbers have declined from about 750 males to 240.

This decline has occurred despite releasing 110 females from Minnesota into the southern population (Buena Vista) during 2006-’09. Although this translocation temporarily stabilized the loss of genetic variation in the population, the numbers of birds has declined, suggesting that the decline is not due to inbreeding. The translocation was part of the previous 10-year management plan (2004-’14) for prairie-chickens by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

That plan also called for acquiring an additional 15,000 acres to connect the four DNR wildlife management areas that have prairie-chickens (Leola, Buena Vista, Paul Olsen and Mead). A lack of funds and increasing land prices hampered that effort, with only a minimal number of acres added during this period. In the meantime, the overall amount of habitat for prairie-chickens has declined due to land use changes.

The next management plan is now being developed, and in late February, the DNR held a public meeting in Wisconsin Rapids to gain public input on the new plan. The full draft of the plan is expected later this spring, after which there will be a final public review this summer, after which the DNR will seek approval by the Natural Resources Board this fall.

The Wisconsin Society for Ornithology has a long history of involvement in prairie-chicken conservation. This includes the purchase of two properties (60 acres total) with grassland habitat for prairie-chickens in the Buena Vista area. WSO President Michael John Jaeger represented the society at the February meeting, and WSO also provided written comments, which were recently summarized by the DNR and are available at http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/WildlifeHabitat/prairiechicken.html

All of the public comments after the meeting expressed very strong support for maintaining grasslands for prairie-chickens on both public and private lands. Furthermore, there was strong support for strengthening viewing opportunities and community efforts, such as the prairie-chicken festival, to support the local economy.

For the next management plan, the DNR presented four alternatives for their management areas, including a plan to cut back on management on some properties. However, the majority of comments, including those from WSO, supported continued management for prairie-chickens on all four management areas.

There also was strong support for expanding available grassland by working more with private and other public land managers in the region. It was clear, however, that additional DNR land purchases were not being considered. It is still too early to tell what might be proposed in the next draft of the management plan, but the WSO will continue to monitor its progress and promote more habitat for prairie-chickens and other species that need extensive grasslands.

Peter Dunn is a professor of biological sciences at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and a member of WSO's Conservation Committee. He studies Greater Prairie-Chickens, Common Yellowthroats and Tree Swallows and can be contacted at pdunn@uwm.edu

This chart shows the number of male prairie-chickens seen on booming grounds from 1990 to 2015. Numbers are divided into two populations: north (Mead/Paul Olson) and south (Buena Vista/Leola) of the Wisconsin River.
Spring Hearings voters support a crane hunt

At the annual Wisconsin Conservation Congress Spring Hearings held on April 10, the question of whether to approve a Sandhill Crane hunt in the state was asked once again. And once again those attending the hearings voted to support the establishment of a hunt. The tally was 2,349 YES to 2,049 NO.

The advisory question asked whether voters supported legislation to give the Department of Natural Resources authority to begin developing a hunting season for Sandhill Cranes. The outcome is only an early step in the long process needed to establish a hunt. The next step would be for a state legislator to introduce a bill allowing a hunt.

A similar advisory question was on the Spring Hearings ballot two years ago. That advisory question also passed, but no legislative activity has occurred on the topic since that time.

In 2015, the Sandhill Crane hunt question passed by a much larger margin, 2,255 YES votes to 1,554 NO votes, compared with this year’s voting. As shown in the accompanying graphic, 495 more NO votes were cast this year than in 2015, while YES votes increased by only 94.

This year, a crane hunt was rejected in 18 counties, or one-fourth of the state.

WSO convention will celebrate citizen scientists

“Celebrating Citizen Science” will be the theme for the 2017 WSO convention in Carter, with a focus on the opportunities for wider individual participation.

In ornithology, perhaps more than in any other scientific discipline, citizens make incredible contributions. There simply would not be as much information about birds available if it were not for the efforts of non-professional birders around the world.

This year, WSO will be celebrating the ornithological accomplishments of citizen scientists in Wisconsin. We will discuss past, present and future efforts with a special emphasis on the Nicolet National Forest Bird Survey.

We also will examine the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas II and look for ways to get more people involved. We will look at the work being done on Potawatomi tribal lands and also discuss citizen science opportunities available across the state.

WSO’s vice president and Conservation Committee chair, Dr. Andy Cassini, will launch the presentations with a discussion of current biological threats to bird conservation and the amazing statewide initiatives to counteract these threats. Cassini is a conservation biologist and educator who earned his doctorate in zoology with an emphasis on conservation biology and ornithology from UW-Madison. He currently is developing an environmental sustainability education pathway for the Kettle Moraine School District.

Samuel Schratz, wildlife biologist with the Forest County Potawatomi Community, will discuss the “Birds on Potawatomi Tribal Lands.” Schratz has a great deal of ecological experience, especially with bats, but is excited to be working on several projects aimed at monitoring and conserving avian species.

Dr. Eva Lewandowski, who coordinates the Citizen-based Monitoring Program for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, will discuss ways people can become more involved in monitoring bats, frogs, water quality and more. In addition to her work for the DNR, Lewandowski is active in citizen science at the national and international levels. She has published research on citizen science outcomes, is a member of the Citizen Science Association’s communications team, and is president of the Participatory and Citizen Science Working Group for the Society for Conservation Biology. She earned her doctorate in conservation biology from the University of Minnesota.

The Wisconsin Citizen-based Monitoring Network is a collaboration of more than 180 projects and organizations that monitor plants, animals and habitats to better understand and protect them. It is the result of Wisconsin’s century-long tradition of groundbreaking citizen science work.

Tom Prestby and Nick Anich will present “Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas II: Preliminary Results and Outlook for the Next 3 Years.” They will discuss the work that will be required to complete the Atlas over the next three years and provide ways for more people to get involved.

Anich works as a DNR conservation biologist in Ashland, serves as Atlas coordinator and is one of the Wisconsin eBird Team leaders. He earned his master’s degree researching Swainson’s Warblers at Arkansas State. He also has been involved with research on Kirtland’s Warblers and Wisconsin’s resident boreal birds.

Prestby received his master’s degree at UW-Green Bay researching shorebirds and continues to work with UW-Green Bay on various research projects. In his work for the Atlas, Prestby coordinates training events, reviews Atlas data and conducts field work. He also serves on WSO’s State Records Committee.

The Saturday banquet keynote speaker will be Dr. Robert Howe, a professor at UW-Green Bay who has been involved in bird research and conservation in Wisconsin and beyond. Howe will present on “30 Years of the Nicolet National Forest Bird Survey,” which concluded in 2016 as the longest running volunteer bird survey in any national forest.

Howe will share results, providing insights on the breeding birds of northern Wisconsin. The project involved over 600 volunteers, produced a list of 187 species and recorded over 650,000 birds.

Much of Howe’s work involves bird population ecology, but he has published recent articles on Great Lakes coastal wetlands, environmental indicators, landscape ecology and forest dynamics. As director of the Cofrin Center for Biodiversity, Howe is co-leader of the Wabikon Forest Dynamics Plot in northern Wisconsin, and administers numerous research grants involving student researchers and collaborators from other institutions.
Lorri Howski: ‘Atlasing has gotten me hooked and out of the house!’

The Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas II is a volunteer-driven effort to survey the distribution and abundance of our state’s breeding birds. Since the project started in 2015, our volunteer team has grown to include more than 1,235 Atlasers who have submitted nearly 56,000 checklists.

Who are these incredible volunteers? It turns out that once you get past the binoculars, our Atlasers are as varied as the bird species they observe. This series turns the spotlight on a few of the many dedicated men and women who have helped the Atlas achieve such tremendous success to date.

**NAME:** Lorri Howski

**HOMETOWN:** Oak Creek

**AGE:** 54

**NUMBER OF YEARS BIRDING:** 2

**OTHER CITIZEN SCIENCE EXPERIENCE:** I haven’t been involved in any previous citizen science projects. I would love to get involved and volunteer with the nocturnal atlasing efforts of WBBA II.

**FAVORITE BIRD:** My favorite birds are owls.

**MOTIVATION TO ATLAS:** I was more of a wildlife photographer and started photographing birds a few years ago. Then I started recording for the WBBA II this past year. I read some wonderful information regarding the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas and bird populations, and how important it is to have documentation on what kind of birds breed here in Wisconsin, and that’s when I decided to help contribute.

**PRIMARY ATLASING LOCATION:** I atlas all over Wisconsin, but South Milwaukee CW, Hales Corners CE and Greendale CE are my primary blocks. We have many local parks located along the lake and inland where many species breed.

**MOST EXCITING ATLAS FIND:** My most memorable find happened this year! I am in the process of observing several different pairs of nesting owls. All five sets are at different stages and are presently with their young. I love observing, recording and photographing their behavior and their interaction with each other.

**MOST REWARDING PART OF ATLASING:** Atlasing has gotten me hooked and out of the house! I enjoy traveling around Wisconsin and exploring new places I haven’t been to before. I love getting outside and learning something new every day about all the different species that visit Wisconsin.

**HOW HAS PARTICIPATING IN THE ATLAS CHANGED THE WAY YOU BIRD?** Atlasing has really driven me to focus on the behavior of the birds. It has me examining birds more in detail instead of just looking at them. It has taught me to be more aware and to take time to stop, listen and watch. It’s nice to know that the information that I provide will help preserve the birds and keep them in their natural environment for years to come.

**ADVICE FOR SOMEONE “ON THE FENCE” ABOUT PARTICIPATING:** I say just do it! At first I felt I didn’t know enough to do it. But with help from other birders in the field, I have become a much better observer and I’m able to identify more birds each time I go out. There are great resources and people out there to help.

Lorri Howski says: “I was more of a wildlife photographer. . . . Then I started recording for the WBBA II this past year. I read . . . how important it is to have documentation on what kind of birds breed here in Wisconsin, and that’s when I decided to help contribute.”

Lorri Howski photographed and atlased these young Great Horned Owls this spring.

New team leads the charge to raise funds for WSO’s Honey Creek

Persche is a graduate student studying wildlife ecology at UW-Madison under Dr. Anna Pidgeon. This spring she is a teaching assistant for two courses, including Birds of Southern Wisconsin.

She has enjoyed working with students as they become familiar with different species, and leading them on field trips to natural areas around Madison.

Persche’s thesis research is focused on the effects of topography and microclimate on spring phenology in the Baraboo Hills. She hopes to shed light on the interrelationships between advancing tree leaf-out, caterpillar abundance and forest bird density across a varied landscape.

This summer will be her first field season and she is excited to be working in some beautiful preserves, including part of the Honey Creek Valley.
Atlas particularly needs the help of WSO members

By Carrie Becker
WBBA II Communications Director

Birds are an essential part of Wisconsin’s culture and ecology, and nobody understands this better than WSO members. Many species face grave threats from habitat loss, climate change and other human-caused pressures and nearly one-third are imperiled or will be without intervention.

To conserve them, we need a current understanding of birds that rely on Wisconsin habitats to breed and raise their young. To gain this understanding, we need you! Volunteers are the heart of the WBBA II, which seeks to survey birds on more than 1,200 priority blocks of land. As a volunteer observer, or “atlaser,” you simply head to a 3 x 3 mile block of your choosing and record the different birds you see there.

For each species, you document the breeding behaviors observed, ranging from none to perhaps a singing male in suitable habitat, to the unmistakable sight of a bird feeding its young.

Birdwatching is an action many WSO members already engage in regularly. With just a few extra steps you can turn casual birding into critical data-gathering for what is certainly the largest citizen-science project in state history.

The mission of WSO is to promote the enjoyment, study and conservation of Wisconsin’s birds.

The Society provides opportunities for all people to enjoy resident and migratory birds, while being a leading steward of and ambassador for Wisconsin birds. You can help WSO to fulfill its mission by becoming an atlaser in 2017.

And if you already are an atlaser, you have the sincere thanks of the WBBA II Steering Committee, which hopes you’ve found participation to be rewarding enough that you will continue your efforts for the next three field seasons as well.

Survey strategies for colonial waterbirds

Certain waterbird species typically breed in colonies. Preferred spots to find colonial nesters are sites that are protected from predation like an island, a lakeshore, a beaver pond, or even in the cases of some gulls, the roof of a building.

Because breeding only occurs in colonial situations, seeing these species in your block is not necessarily indicative of local breeding because these species range widely, and therefore codes like H and P are generally not useful for these species. Similarly, FL and FY codes away from nest sites are not reliable because these species disperse widely once fledged.

Check out the tips in this article and then check the blocks around you for some colonial waterbirds: http://ebird.org/content/atlaswi/

Submit Atlas checklists from the field with improved eBird app

The Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas II is a joint project of several Wisconsin conservation organizations, including WSO, but data collection is administered through eBird. WBBA II was the first atlas to partner with eBird to use their real-time, online checklist program, paving the way for surveys such as the Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas to utilize this technology.

“Partnering with eBird has made atlasing easier than ever, and they continue to work with us to improve all of our tools,” said Tom Prestby, chair of the Atlas Training & Support Committee. “Now we can add photos and audio to checklists, and even enter complete checklists in real time right from the field with the eBird mobile app.”

A major enhancement to the mobile app has been rolled out just in time for the 2017 field season that allows atlasers to enter checklists with breeding codes. Past iterations of the app did not allow for entry of breeding codes, causing a built-in delay from the time an observation was made until the time it could be completely entered into the database. Now users can enter complete checklists as observations are made.

“As long as you are sure the location you atlased correctly falls in a block and you do not have any photos or audio to add, you can do everything from your phone,” Prestby said.

Minimizing delay between the time of observation and entry is critical, Prestby said, because important details can be forgotten or lost before they are submitted.

Atlas organizers want to ensure that volunteers make use of this app whenever possible and have created a how-to guide that can be found at http://ebird.org/content/atlaswi/news/mobile-atlasing-is-easier-than-ever/
Cutright Club to gather materials at convention for Birders’ Exchange

For more than two decades, Birders’ Exchange has been supporting bird research and conservation by providing materials and equipment to a variety of partners in Latin America and the Caribbean.

There are researchers, educators, and conservationists striving to protect birds and their habitats, but many are working without the most basic equipment, such as binoculars and field guides.

Now handled by the American Birding Association, the Birders’ Exchange program collects donations of new and used equipment and distributes it to our colleagues working to conserve birds and their habitats throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

The Noel J. Cutright Bird Club in Newburg is collecting donations for this program and later this year plans to make a bulk shipment to ABA.

If you are coming to the WSO convention in June, bring along your contribution and there will be a box at the registration table in which you can leave your items and the club will take care of the rest.

Or if you know a member of the club and see them elsewhere ask them to take it to a club meeting.

According to Kenn Kaufman, author of *Birds of North America*, “Birders’ Exchange is an inspired idea and a highly effective reality. It’s making a big difference throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.”

And according to David Allen Sibley, author of *The Sibley Guide to Birds*

“With Birders’ Exchange, the need for a good pair of binoculars won’t stand in the way of developing first-class ornithologists all over the world, and can only lead to increased information and appreciation of the birds and their habitats.”

Here is what is wanted:

- **Binoculars** – especially rubber armored and/or waterproof binoculars
- **Digital cameras** – especially SLRs and telephoto lenses
- **Spotting scopes**
- **Tripods**
- **Field guides to Neotropical birds and field guides to North American birds (newer editions)**
- **Ornithology texts**
- **Laptop computers** not more than three years old
- **Backpacks** (no broken zippers)
- **iPods or .mp3 players and corresponding microphones**

The equipment must be in good working order. For example, binoculars must be in proper alignment, the focus wheel in operation, and the glass without flaws. Waterproof binoculars are preferred.

For those wishing to ship equipment directly to the ABA, if you are using the U.S. Postal Service, send equipment to:

**American Birding Association**  
c/o Birders’ Exchange  
P.O. Box 744  
Delaware City, DE 1970

For FED EX and UPS send to:  
**American Birding Association**  
c/o Birder’s Exchange  
93 Clinton Street  
Suite ABA  
Delaware City, DE 19706  

UEC launches Brew City Birding Festival

The Urban Ecology Center is launching the Brew City Birding Festival. This new event is a week-long bird-themed festival from Sunday, May 7 through Saturday, May 13. Participants will have a chance to partake in field trips, lectures, family-friendly programs and activities, and bird watching opportunities.

The Sunday kickoff includes a birdbanding demonstration, bird storytelling, crafts and live raptor viewing. Weekday programs feature field trips, lectures and bird-themed programs appropriate for everyone, but focused on the more experienced birder. The festival culminates with UEC’s popular Green Birding Challenge fundraiser.

Organizers said the festival was scheduled at the best time of year to view large numbers of birds in colorful plumage. International Migratory Bird Day is celebrated every May, and this year’s theme is migratory stopover sites. UEC is partnering with several local organizations to feature some of Milwaukee County’s most important migratory stopover sites.


WGLBBO to host IMBD celebration at Forest Beach

Port Washington -- For 2017, International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD) celebrates the importance of local stopover sites and encourages everyone to get involved in protecting them. And what site could be more appropriate for such a celebration than Forest Beach?

Migratory Preserve, just north of Port Washington.

On Saturday, May 20, the Western Great Lakes Bird and Bat Observatory and the American Bird Conservancy will host a countywide collection of activities celebrating IMBD and offering tips on how individual backyards can serve as stopover sites by offering the food, water, and shelter birds need, along with safety from free-roaming cats and pane glass.

Events on May 20 will include bird banding demonstrations, a native-plant sale, “ecological” rummage, and guided bird hikes at Forest Beach, 4970 Country Club Rd, Port Washington, as well as at Lion’s Den Gorge Nature Preserve south of Port Washington.

It can be a long journey for many of spring’s most colorful songbirds between their winter homes in Central and South America and their breeding sites in Wisconsin and other areas of the United States and Canada. Along the way, birds need spots to rest and refuel, and the health and safety of these sites is critical to their survival.

Located along Lake Michigan, Forest Beach contains a 5-acre hardwood forest, wetland ponds, open grasslands and prairie. The site had been a failing golf course, but the Ozaukee Washington Land Trust purchased the land in 2008 because its location and attributes lend itself to supporting migratory birds along the Lake Michigan Flyway. Today, thanks to the help of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the preserve hosts a “patchwork quilt” of habitats that support all kinds of migratory birds, dragonflies, reptiles and mammals. Interpretive trails invite visitors to learn about the restoration.

For a complete schedule of events: [http://wglbbo.org/](http://wglbbo.org/)
REGISTRATION April 1 – May 19 is at the following rates:

- Free registration for children 12 and under, when accompanied by a registered parent or guardian
- $20 registration fee for students ages 13-22 (ages 13-18 must be accompanied by a registered parent or guardian)
- $40 registration fee for adults

PLEASE NOTE: After May 19, no registrations by mail or online will be accepted.

- Registration at the convention will be at the following rates:
  - Free registration for children 12 and under, when accompanied by a registered parent or guardian
  - $25 registration for students ages 13-22 (ages 13-18 must be accompanied by a registered parent or guardian)
  - $50 registration fee for adults

Registration fee includes:

- Friday afternoon eBird Workshop (2:00-3:30); Member Appreciation Picnic (4:00-6:00)
- Friday evening Awards and Reception (7:00-8:30); Nocturnal Atlasing Field Trip (8:30-9:30)
- Saturday morning Car Caravan Field Trips
- Saturday noon Lunch and Saturday afternoon Presentations
- Saturday evening Keynote Speaker Program (Saturday evening Banquet costs extra)
- Sunday & Monday All-Day Car Caravan Field Trips (Bus Trip has additional cost)

Non-birding spouses who only wish to attend the Saturday Evening Banquet are not required to pay the convention registration fee. Please enter their name in the appropriate box on the Registration Form (online or on p.5) and include payment for them for the banquet.

Registrations will be processed beginning April 1, and will be confirmed by email (unless USPS mail notification is requested). Those who register and pay online (an easy and fast way to register) will receive an immediate confirmation by email.

Questions? Contact convention registrar Jeff Zimmerman (920-980-8083 or ConventionRegistration@wsobirds.org)

Convention displays

Bird-related groups and organizations and vendors are welcome to request complimentary display space at the convention. Please email the convention committee at WSOConvention@wsobirds.org with the name of your group and your contact information. Space is limited.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE CONVENTION

THE BIRDING REGION & CONVENTION FOCUS: “Celebrating Citizen Science” will be the theme for this year’s convention in Carter, WI. In Ornithology, perhaps more than in any other scientific discipline, citizens make incredible contributions to our field. We simply would not have the wealth of information about birds if it were not for the efforts of non-professional birders around the world. This year, we will be celebrating the ornithological accomplishments in the state of Wisconsin. We will discuss past, present and future efforts with a special emphasis on the Nicolet National Forest Bird Survey. We will also examine the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas II and look for ways to get more people involved.
FRIDAY CONVENTION CHECK-IN: **Beginning at 2 p.m. Friday, June 16**, check-in at the Potawatomi Carter Casino Hotel. Come in the “Hotel” entrance (NOT the “Casino” entrance). Pick up your name tag, convention materials, and your bag of “extras” if you ordered a shirt or items from the WSO Bookstore. **(Hotel check-in begins at 3 p.m.)**

FRIDAY AFTERNOON eBird WORKSHOP **(included in the registration fee):** Bring your computer and/or smartphone for a workshop led by Tom Prestby on Friday, June 16, 2 to 3:30 p.m. It will include an on-site field trip followed by hands-on application of eBird use.

FRIDAY MEMBER APPRECIATION PICNIC **(included in the registration fee):** Come to American Legion Memorial Park in nearby Wabeno for a picnic of sub sandwiches and more on Friday, June 16, 4 to 6 p.m. Be sure to wear your name tag. Directions to the park will be given with your confirmation and at check-in.

FRIDAY EVENING AWARDS CEREMONY **(included in the registration fee):** Presentation of WSO’s annual awards will be Friday, June 16, in a 7 p.m. ceremony at the hotel. Refreshments will follow.

FRIDAY EVENING NOCTURNAL ATLASING FIELD TRIP **(included in the registration fee):** Friday, June 16, at 8:30 p.m., car caravan to a location 2 miles from the convention site for an hour of Atlassing for owls and other nocturnal birds.

SATURDAY MORNING FIELD TRIPS **(included in the registration fee):** Sign-up sheets at the convention check-in area.

SATURDAY LUNCH **(included in the registration fee):** soup & salad buffet (+ vegetarian); bread & cookies; coffee, iced tea

SATURDAY AFTERNOON PRESENTATIONS **(included in the registration fee):** The afternoon begins with an overview of the many different aspects of citizen science, followed by digging deeper into some of those aspects.

SATURDAY EVENINGBUFFET BANQUET: $30/person. Sign-up on the Registration Form (online or on p.5): chicken, beef tips, cheese ravioli & marinara sauce, potatoes & gravy, vegetable medley; mixed salad; rolls; cheese cake; coffee, water

SATURDAY EVENING KEYNOTER **(included in the registration fee):** The program will feature Dr. Robert Howe, who will speak about 30 years of the UWGB Nicolet National Forest Bird Survey. It is the longest running volunteer bird survey in any national forest. Work on this project has involved over 600 volunteers, has produced a species list of 187 birds and has recorded over 65,000 birds.

SUNDAY & MONDAY ALL-DAY FIELD TRIPS: Choose from a bus tour and several car caravans, one of which will be Atlas-focused. **(Car caravans are included in the registration fee)** More information is on page 4 of these materials.

SUNDAY EVENING BIRDS & BEERS **(Limited Seating – Dining Reservations Required):** This option (Sunday, 5-8 p.m.) will be at the Big Easel Bistro & Gallery in nearby Wabeno. **See Page 8 for all the details.**

SILENT AUCTION: Proceeds from this year’s WSO Silent Auction will benefit our Honey Creek Preserve and the Breeding Bird Atlas. **(Cash or check only; NO credit cards)**

CONVENTION SHIRTS: Men’s and Women’s Cut short-sleeved convention T-shirts will be CITY GREEN (made by Anvil: see their website for details) and feature the convention logo. Shirts will be available by pre-order on the Registration Form.

CONVENTION LODGING

For the third year in a row, WSO will have an actual “convention hotel,” providing an extra measure of convenience for convention-goers who would enjoy staying at the site of the Friday evening awards ceremony; Saturday morning field trips, luncheon, annual meeting, presentations and banquet; and Sunday & Monday all-day field trips.

CONVENTION HOTEL INFORMATION


- Rate - $83 per night + tax - Standard Double Queen
- NO Breakfast. But every room has a refrigerator and microwave and coffee maker.

ADDITIONAL HOTEL INFORMATION

Best Western Crandon Inn – 9075 E Pioneer St – Crandon, WI 54520 – Phone: 1-715-478-4000 Mention: WSO Room Block

Rate - $114.99 per night + tax - Standard Double Queen – 13 rooms have been blocked for our use.

Every room has a refrigerator and microwave and coffee maker.

You may request “Grab & Go Breakfast” the day before you need it (some items may be available at 4 a.m.)

➔ Rooms released May 30, 2017

CAMPGROUND INFORMATION

At the convention site (Potawatomi Carter Casino Hotel), **you may park your RV for FREE** at designated sites (many with electricity). No reservations; first-come, first-served.

*** WSO Convention Registration Materials - Page 2 ***
**PRELIMINARY CONVENTION SCHEDULE**

**Friday, June 16**

2:00-7:00  **Convention check-in** at the Potawatomi Carter Casino Hotel (hereafter referred to as "hotel")

2:00-3:30  **eBird Workshop + onsite field trip**, led by Tom Prestby

4:00-6:00  **Member Appreciation Picnic** at American Legion Memorial Park in Wabeno (including in the registration fee)

6:00  **Silent Auction opens**

7:00-8:30  **WSO President Michael John Jaeger opens the convention** at the hotel

WSO Award Presentations

Reception to honor Award Winners (including in the registration fee)

8:30-9:30  **Nocturnal Atlasing Field Trip** – car caravan to location 2 miles from hotel

**Saturday, June 17**

**Early Morning Car Caravan Field Trips** meet rain-or-shine at the hotel parking lot.

*(Sign-up sheets in the convention check-in area indicate departure times and destinations.)*

**All Saturday activities below are at the hotel**

10:00  **Convention check-in continues until 1 p.m.** Pick up pre-ordered “extras” and check out the Silent Auction

11:00  **Buffet Lunch** (including in the registration fee)

Noon  **WSF Annual Meeting** with election of officers

Afternoon  **Presentations & Workshops:**

1:00  Presentation: “Wisconsin Citizen Science in Action”

Presenter: Andy Cassini, PhD, WSO Vice President and Conservation Chair

1:30  Presentation: “Birds on Potawatomi Tribal Lands”

Presenters: Samuel Schratz, Forest County Potawatomi Community Natural Resources Biologist-Wildlife and Matt Steinbach, Environmental Sciences Manager for the Forest County Potawatomi Community

2:30  **Break**

2:45  Presentation: “Wisconsin Citizen Based Monitoring Network”

Presenter: Eva Lewendowski, PhD, Coordinator, Wisconsin Citizen-based Monitoring Network

3:45  Presentation: “Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas II: Preliminary Results and Outlook for the Next 3 Years”

Presenter: Tom Prestby WBBAI Training and Support Coordinator, and Nick Anich, WBBAIN Coordinator, DNR

5:30  **Social Hour** with cash bar. **Silent Auction** bidding concludes at 6:30.

6:30  **Buffet Banquet** – Cost: $30/person (Cost is NOT included in the registration fee; sign-up on the Registration Form)

Henny Penny chicken, Beef Tips, Cheese Ravioli & Marinara Sauce, Potatoes & Gravy, Vegetable Medley; Mixed Salad and Rolls at table: with Cheesecake for dessert

7:30  **Keynote Presentation**: “30 Years of the Nicolet National Forest Bird Survey”

Keynote Speaker: Robert Howe, PhD, University of Wisconsin – Green Bay

After the program: Pay for and pick up Silent Auction items (payment by cash or check only.)

**Sunday, June 18**

4:45 a.m.  **All-Day Field Trips** leave rain-or-shine from the hotel parking lot

*Sign up on the Registration Form.*

Be in the parking lot at 4:45 a.m. to meet the trip leaders, find your group, and get your lunch (if you ordered one).

5-8 p.m.  "**Birds & Beers**" at Big Easel Gallery & Bistro in Wabeno – see information on page 8

**Monday, June 19**

4:45 a.m.  **All-Day Field Trips** leave rain-or-shine from the hotel parking lot

*Sign up on the Registration Form.*

Be in the parking lot at 4:45 a.m. to meet the trip leaders, find your group, and get your lunch (if you ordered one).

**SATURDAY MORNING FIELD TRIPS**

These morning car caravan trips depart rain-or-shine from the hotel parking lot. Several of the field trips will offer the opportunity to do some Atlasing. Destinations and departure times will be listed on the sign-up sheets in the convention check-in area.

**Tentative destinations:** Atlas priority block Pickerel CE, Atlas priority block Wabeno CE, Ed’s Lake Trail (serious hiking) or Michigan Rapids (serious hiking), Otter Lake/Deer Lake and Indian Lake, Cathedral of the Pines, Diamond Roof Road
**SUNDAY & MONDAY ALL-DAY FIELD TRIPS:**

All-Day field trips will be on Sunday and Monday. These trips are part of the convention and are open only to convention registrants. WSO members have first priority until April 30; after that, remaining spaces will be open to non-members. Transportation options are a coach bus or carpooling caravans.

**Please Note**: You may NOT sign up for a bus one day and a car caravan the other day.

**Bus**: Participants will be charged a flat fee of $60. The fee is the same whether you plan to participate on one or both days. There is a 40-person maximum for this group. **Indicate on the Registration Form which days you will participate**. There will be large signs in the hotel parking lot to facilitate line-up and the distribution of box lunches (look for the “Bus” sign).

**Car Caravans**: There will be 3 car caravans, one of which will be Atlas-focused. Each group will be limited to 24 people. **Because of parking limitations at many sites, car pooling will be required**. When you register, sign up for one of the 3 groups (A, B, C; see the table below). **If you want to be in the same car caravan with friends/family, you should submit your Registration Forms online or in the mail at approximately the same time and indicate a letter for the field trip for your “group.”** Your registration confirmation will indicate which group you are in. **You must stay with your group both days to facilitate size and arrangements**. **Indicate on the Registration Form which days you will participate**. Each passenger is encouraged to give the driver a minimum of $10/day for gas reimbursement. There will be large signs in the hotel parking lot to facilitate line-up.

**Preliminary Destinations:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sunday</th>
<th>Monday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bus</strong></td>
<td>Thunder Lake SWA, Shelp Lake and Nicolet National Forest core roads</td>
<td>Dunbar SNA, Benson Lake road, Peshtigo River Road, Knowles Creek Impoundment, Armstrong Creek swamp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Car Caravan B</strong></td>
<td>Nicolet National Forest core roads. Shelp Lake, Thunder Lake SWA.</td>
<td>Armstrong Creek swamp, Knowles Creek Impoundment, Peshtigo River Road, Benson Lake road and Dunbar SNA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Car Caravan C</strong></td>
<td>Armstrong Creek swamp, Knowles Creek Impoundment, Peshtigo River Road, Benson Lake road and Dunbar SNA.</td>
<td>Nicolet National Forest core roads. Shelp Lake, Thunder Lake SWA.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Atlas-focused Caravan A will help collect valuable data for WBBAII in unclaimed Atlas priority blocks. The caravan will be split into two groups each day. On Monday one group will be leisurely birding on roads, traversing diverse types of high-quality forest and the other * will be exploring this same type of habitat but in primarily off road areas, including multiple State Natural Areas (SNA). This second trip will involve some hiking in rugged terrain.

*BRING APPROPRIATE CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR TO PARTICIPATE!*

**Box Lunches**: A $12 box lunch option is available for these trips. **If you want a box lunch, indicate it on the Registration Form, and indicate your “options” preference for each day on the Box Lunch Order Form**. Box lunches will be ready each morning before departure.

**Departure**: **Both days**, those taking the bus & car caravans will **meet at 4:45 a.m. at the hotel parking lot** to meet leaders and get lunches. Look for the sign for your group (“Bus”, “Car Caravan A”, “Car Caravan B”, “Car Caravan C”).

**Please Note**: If you are going on the All-Day Field Trip on Monday, you will have to check out of your hotel room before you leave on that field trip.

**Coolers & Snacks**: All participants should **bring their own snacks and beverages**. The bus will have coolers for those who ordered box lunches. A few large coolers will also be available on the bus trip for additional food and beverages. Car caravan participants should bring their own small coolers to hold their food and beverages and/or box lunches.

**Weather & Other Tips**: **Field trips will continue as planned, rain-or-shine**. Be prepared for unpredictable weather by dressing in layers of clothing. Some habitats may be wet, so wear appropriate footgear. Wear a hat that protects from both rain and sun. Bring **insect repellent** and **sunscreen**. Bring your binoculars, field guide, spotting scope and camera, if you wish. A backpack is a convenient way to store your belongings. If you are in a car caravan, bring a **two-way radio** if you have one, so we can communicate on Channel 11/22 while driving. Cell phone coverage is spotty in many areas.

*** WSO Convention Registration Materials - Page 4 ***
# REGISTRATION FORM – WSO 78TH ANNUAL CONVENTION

**Registration Options:**

1) **April 1 - May 19** register and pay ONLINE at the WSO web site, wsobirds.org
   OR

2) **April 1 - May 19** register by MAIL –
   Mail this convention Registration Form & your registration payment check (make check out to “WSO Convention”),
   plus a box lunch form (if needed; p.6), and WSO Bookstore order form (if needed; p.7)
   to: Convention Registrar Jeff Zimmerman, 2708 Eisner Avenue, Sheboygan, WI 53083.

After May 19, you must register at the door. The cost will be more (see page 1).

Participant #1 ____________________________________  Participant #2 ____________________

Additional Participants __________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Address _______________________________________________________ City______________________________ State__________ Zip ________
E-mail ____________________________________________________________________________ Telephone (_______) _______ - _____________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost (multiply by $)</th>
<th>This Column (#)</th>
<th>Total $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Convention Registration Fee:</strong> (see p.1 for the list of what this includes)**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult: $40</td>
<td></td>
<td># of Adults:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student: $20 (age 13-22)</td>
<td></td>
<td># of Students:</td>
<td>$__________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child: Free (12 &amp; under)</td>
<td></td>
<td># of Children:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Saturday evening Banquet</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-birding spouse who only wants the banquet:</td>
<td></td>
<td># of Persons:</td>
<td>$__________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name: _________________________________________</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All-Day Trip:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUS Day(s) you will attend: Sun Mon</td>
<td>$60/person</td>
<td># of Persons:</td>
<td>$__________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAR CARAVAN Day(s) you will attend: Sun Mon</td>
<td>$0/person</td>
<td># of Persons:</td>
<td>(no cost )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sunday Box Lunch</strong> (see next page)**</td>
<td>$12/person</td>
<td># of Persons:</td>
<td>$__________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Include an order form for each person</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monday Box Lunch</strong> (see next page)**</td>
<td>$12/person</td>
<td># of Persons:</td>
<td>$__________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Include an order form for each person</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sunday evening “Birds &amp; Beers”</strong></td>
<td>$20/person</td>
<td># of Persons:</td>
<td>$__________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-refundable voucher (see page 8)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Convention Shirts by pre-order only** (tax is included in the price)
Indicate type of shirt(s), size(s), and number(s) you want:
Men’s Short-sleeve T: S__ M__ L__ XL__ XXL__
Women’s Short-sleeve T: S__ M__ L__ XL__ XXL__
$ 15 each X total # of short-sleeve T’s = Total $__________

**WSO Bookstore Order:** TOTAL amount due from the “WSO Bookstore order form” (p.8) $__________

**WSO Membership fee for non-members:**
Not necessary to attend the convention. But new members who join WSO before April 30 will have priority on the all-day field trips.
$30/Single or $35/Family

**Check #: __________________**

**GRAND TOTAL:** $__________

*** WSO Convention Registration Materials - Page 5 ***
**BOX LUNCH ORDER FORMS**

Box lunches may be ordered for the all-day field trips, Sunday and/or Monday, whether you are on the bus or in a car caravan. The box lunches will be prepared by the hotel.

**Cost is $12 per box lunch per day.** (Fill in the appropriate amount on the Registration Form.)

Each lunch will contain: your option (see below); plus a bag of chips, pasta salad, homemade cookie, bottle of water, fork, napkin, mustard & mayonnaise packets on the side.

**NOTE:** If you want a box lunch, you must include a separate order form for EACH participant with your registration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant #1: (Name)</th>
<th>Participant #2: (Name)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Please CHECK which group you are in:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Please CHECK which group you are in:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___Bus    OR    ___Car Caravan</td>
<td>___Bus    OR    ___Car Caravan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OPTION</strong> (choose one for each day; they may be the same or different each day):</td>
<td><strong>OPTION</strong> (choose one for each day; they may be the same or different each day):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H – Ham &amp; Swiss with tomato &amp; lettuce on a hoagie roll</td>
<td>H – Ham &amp; Swiss with tomato &amp; lettuce on a hoagie roll</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R – Roast beef &amp; cheddar with tomato &amp; lettuce on a hoagie roll</td>
<td>R – Roast beef &amp; cheddar with tomato &amp; lettuce on a hoagie roll</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T – Turkey &amp; provolone with tomato &amp; lettuce on a hoagie roll</td>
<td>T – Turkey &amp; provolone with tomato &amp; lettuce on a hoagie roll</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V – Veggie Wrap with hummus and provolone cheese</td>
<td>V – Veggie Wrap with hummus and provolone cheese</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**WSO BOOKSTORE ORDER FORM**

Name(s) __________________________________________

---

**PLEASE NOTE:**

*WSO Bookstore items will be available to you at the convention by pre-order only.* Ordered items will be brought to the convention, where you can pick them up at the WSO convention check-in table.

You can order WSO Bookstore items as part of the online convention registration; OR if you register for the convention by mail, use this WSO Bookstore Order Form and include it with your convention Registration Form, putting the **TOTAL** amount due from this page on the Registration Form. *(Prices include sales tax)*

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Price per Unit</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Total Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Wisconsin</em></td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covers 214 species in depth. Hardcover, 624 pages.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edited by Cutright, Harriman, Howe. 2006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Wisconsin’s Favorite Bird Haunts</em></td>
<td>$15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describes birding hotspots in every Wisconsin County. Spiral bound,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Wisconsin Birds, Field Checklist</em></td>
<td>$5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three-panel card. 2016 update. Pack of 25</td>
<td></td>
<td>#</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>WSO Passenger Pigeon VISOR -- NEW</em></td>
<td>$17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone-colored visor with embroidered WSO logo. Adjustable. 2017</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>WSO Passenger Pigeon CAP -- NEW</em></td>
<td>$17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olive-colored cap with embroidered WSO logo. Adjustable. 2017</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>WBBA II Scarlet Tanager Cap</em></td>
<td>$17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone-colored cap with embroidered Scarlet Tanager Breeding Bird</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Atlas II logo. Adjustable. 2015</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>WSO “We Brake for Birds.” Bumper Sticker</em></td>
<td>$2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue with white lettering. 3” x 12”. 2013</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**TOTAL** *(includes tax)*

Enter this amount on the Registration Form in the **“WSO Bookstore Order”** box

---

**Please Remember:** If you order WSO Bookstore items or convention shirts, don’t forget to pick them up at the check-in table. **If you fail to pick up your items,** there will be additional charges for shipping them to you.
Sunday Evening Birds & Beers
– 5:00-8:00 P.M. –

at the Big Easel Bistro & Gallery in nearby Wabeno:
(1784 MAPLE AVE, WABENO WI)

We are required to have a minimum of 40 people dining during Birds & Beers. You must buy a voucher NOW to reserve a seat. Only those with vouchers will be able to dine – voucher to be used towards final cost of your bill. The vouchers are not refundable. If you purchase a voucher and can’t make it to Birds & Beers, be sure to get it to someone who can use it. There will be a separate outdoor tent that will offer a cash bar and music, which doesn’t require reservations – only dining will require a reservation and voucher.

Those who wish to attend must sign up on the Registration Form (online or on p.5) and pay $20 for a non-refundable voucher that you use towards the cost of your gourmet meal and beverages purchased that evening.

Menu:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHOICE OF ENTRÉE:</th>
<th>SIDES:</th>
<th>CHOICE OF DESSERT:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PULLED PORK SANDWICH</td>
<td>TEXAS BEANS</td>
<td>CHIPOTLE BROWNIE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PULLED SMOKED BAR B QUE SQUASH</td>
<td>COLE SLAW</td>
<td>GELATO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMOKED BEEF BRISKET</td>
<td>POTATO SALAD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PRICES WILL RANGE FROM $12 TO $20
DRINKS, TAX AND TIP WILL BE EXTRA

DIRECTIONS:
Potawatomi Carter Casino Hotel
618 WI-32, Wabeno, WI 54566

Head northwest on WI-32 N toward Industrial Park Rd/Old 32 Rd
3.2 mi

Turn left onto Maple Ave
Destination will be on the left (look for tent)

*** Parking is limited – PLEASE Carpool ***
**Eye-opening habitat work:** Just no containing the good Manitowoc project may be doing

By **Jim Knickelbine**

Every morning in spring brings something new, either floral or avian. As I write, a little butter-butt, perhaps smarter than average, is pecking at the suet-feeder out the window. It’s seeing those kinds of things that makes life worthwhile, along with family of course.

And if you see those kinds of things enough you become aware of what’s right and wrong with the places we frequent. You recognize the good and the bad, the rich habitats, the invasive species, and the presence or absence of the birds that should be there. And, hopefully, you also recognize opportunities to make things better, and are willing to work for it.

Recently I’ve had the opportunity to work at an unusual habitat project: the contained disposal facility (the CDF or Containment) in Manitowoc.

The CDF has been there since the early 1970s, and ever since access has been permitted Prof. Charles Sontag has prowled around out there documenting the birds that visit.

There are hundreds of thousands of records of his alone, and of course many others of us have birded there also.

More than 300 species of birds have been recorded there and nearby, and I’m not sure if there’s another single place in Wisconsin with as high a total. But the CDF was never built to be a birding place, and never managed for birds. Many in Manitowoc just remember the time a decade or more ago when Ring-billed Gulls by the thousands nested there, causing an uproar among nearby residents and boaters in the adjacent marina.

The CDF is not just about gulls, however. Waterfowl, shorebirds, songbirds and many others visit this artificial island slowly being filled with harbor dredgings.

So many species migrate along the Lake Michigan shore, and many of them appear to at least check out the CDF as a stopover site. In its present state it is a botanical jumble of mostly invasive species like mugwort, phragmites, purple loosestrife, reed-canary grass, burdock, and ever-appealing natives like stinging nettle.

Still, the vegetation can be thick enough to provide cover, and the little lake inside often has bare shores. Opportunistic birds exploit almost all of the available habitat — whether high quality or not.

Last year, in talking with the excellent folks at U.S. Fish and Wildlife, we wondered if there was an opportunity to begin managing the habitat there. The City of Manitowoc, Army Corps of Engineers and Wisconsin DNR were, to our surprise, all very much in favor of habitat improvement if it didn’t interfere with operation of the CDF. Of course the Wisconsin Stopover Initiative was there to offer technical help.

About four acres already had been finish graded and was now lawn — a much larger lawn than the city wanted to mow. So we proposed putting most of that into native grassland enriched with flowers for pollinators and the migrating monarch butterflies that also use the shoreline, with “islands” of tree and shrub plantings using natives beneficial to songbirds.

In the remaining eight-acre area, covered by nasty invasives, we proposed managing those and again planting aggressive native grasses and forbs, knowing that every three years or so the area would be disturbed and have to be repaired. It won’t be perfect, but it should be better than it was in terms of habitat. We applied for and received grant funding from USFWS and the Lakeshore Natural Resource Partnership, and we are now beginning management.

This first year we have herbicided most of the lawn, except for the fenced dog exercise area.

About 100 good-sized trees and shrubs have just arrived and will be planted in the coming weeks. In fall the rest of the lawn will be planted in native grasses and forbs, and next year a mowed trail will be established so that birders can access the area. The jungle of invasives is being tamed by fire, mowing, and careful herbiciding, and a cover crop and more native grasses and forbs will be planted.

Really wet areas will be seeded with sedge meadow species. We’re hoping the cover crop and plantings will discourage Ring-bills from nesting again — so far they have not been interested.

In order to garner support for this project on city property, we need to be sensitive to neighbors’ concerns. We need to see this as a birding area of opportunity, because it was not constructed for that purpose.

Our relationship with the City of Manitowoc couldn’t be better. They are supportive of the project, and the Parks Department is willing to help. They have approached us about improving habitat on an unmanaged hillside across the road from the containment, and we have applied for funding for that as well.

The entire area — Containment, Maritime Drive and the lower Little Manitowoc River with its riverside trail — is being officially designated as the Manitowoc Lakeshore Birding Area, and it’s all been done in honor of Dr. Sontag. Signage will soon be installed to that effect.

Manitowoc’s interest stems in part from its participation in the Bird City Wisconsin program, which has helped make city officials aware of birds on the lakeshore and the potential to attract visitors by emphasizing birding opportunities.

I hope you have the chance to stop by and watch how this project evolves. I don’t think that anything you do for birds is ever wasted, to steal a line from Aesop, and in this case, we hope to open people’s eyes to the potential good that can be done elsewhere.

Jim Knickelbine is education co-chair for WSO. A native of Manitowoc, he is executive director of Woodland Dunes Nature Center and Preserve and a licensed bird bander. He also leads WSO’s Wisconsin Oriole Count.
Meet WSO archivist’s newfound bird hero

WSO Historian NANCY NABAK maintains the Society’s archives, housed at the Cofrin Center for Biodiversity at UW-Green Bay, and offers us a frequent look at something Found in Our Archives.

Let me introduce you to my newfound bird hero. Her name is Elizabeth Oehlenschlager. I wish I could have met her.

If I had, I think I would’ve tried real hard to make her my friend. Elizabeth was laying groundwork in avian conservation long before most of us had a bird thought in our brain. Her photo caught my eye while in the Archives, so I did a little bit of research and this is some of what I learned.

Oehlenschlager was an avian enthusiast and active in the bird conservation community in a variety of ways, dating back to the earliest days of WSO. Excerpt from the Passenger Pigeon, March 1940, Vol. II, No. 3:

“Miss Elizabeth Oehlenschlager of Milwaukee will show colored bird movies with her lecture at the Madison West High School Auditorium on April 6 at 7:30 p.m. (The movies were taken by John Taylor of Whitefish Bay.) Tickets at $0.25 for adults and $0.15 for children.”

“Elizabeth Oehlenschlager had many years of dedication to our bird friends, but I think a note from Walter Scott, clipped to the photo shown here, after her passing, shows her level of intelligence, creativity and commitment:

“Elizabeth Oehlenschlager died in Milwaukee on December 27, 1954 at about 80 years of age. She had been a Wisconsin Academy member since 1943. Her intense interest in ornithology was specialized in the study of birds of prey, healing of sick and injured birds, and conservation education. She was also an active member in the A.O.U. and the WSO and published a number of papers in their journals.

“Born in Denmark, she came to America as a young girl, when her family settled near Oconomowoc. She had a deep appreciation for literature and the arts, and translated into English a tragedy called “Axel and Walberg” by her grandfather, Adam Gotlob Oehlenschlager, once Denmark’s poet laureate. In the 1937 picture shown here, she is handling a peregrine falcon.”

Oehlenschlager was the right. Oehlenschlager was appointed to the Passenger Pigeon Monument Committee (a very large effort to memorialize the extinction of the Passenger Pigeon) alongside Owen Gromme and Clarence Jung in 1941. In 1949, you can find her in WSO’s 10-year anniversary photo: 2nd row (seated), 8th person on the right.

Oehlenschlager was my newfound bird hero and, in general I think, one cool lady.

-- NANCY NABAK
The Badger Birder

Pine Siskin: *Carduelis pinus*

By Diana Hierlmeier

The Pine Siskin is a very small songbird, with a gray-black sharp pointed bill and a short, notched tail. The bill shape is more slender than most finches. These birds are brown and heavily streaked with subtle yellow edgings on the wings and tails. Flashes of yellow can erupt as the birds take flight. They range in length from 4.5 to 5.5 inches, with a wingspan of 7.1 to 8.7 inches and weighing 0.4 to 0.6 ounces.

This species is known to many observers as an unpredictable winter visitor and is an irruptive species abundant in a given locality one year and often absent the next. General thought regarding their irruptive patterns is in response to the size of the cone crop that is their primary diet.

The Pine Siskin can be found in the Midwest and eastern U.S. in the winter. It nests in the conifer forests of the far North and throughout the West, but makes nearly annual appearances throughout eastern North America and is considered an uncommon summer resident in northern Wisconsin.

The Pine Siskin is highly adapted to surviving extremely cold temperatures. They get through cold winter nights by ramping up their metabolic rates -- typically 40% higher than other songbirds their size. When temperatures drop as low as 94 degrees below zero, they can accelerate their rate up to five times normal for several hours.

These birds also put on half again as much winter fat as Common Redpolls or American Goldfinches. Siskins also are capable of temporarily storing seeds totaling as much as 10% of their body mass in their crop. The energy in that amount of food can get them through five to six nighttime hours of subzero temperatures.

These birds prefer coniferous or mixed coniferous and deciduous forests with open canopies. They are opportunistic and adaptable in their search for seeds. They will forage in weedy fields, scrubby thickets or backyards and gardens.

They have a special taste for Niger or thistle seeds. They will consume seeds of alder, birch, and spruce and of course, pine. They also eat grass seeds as well as buds, flower parts, nectar, and young shoots. In summer they are known to consume caterpillars, aphids and spiders.

Siskins also visit feeders and occasionally eat suet. Expert clingers, they will hang upside down on a catkin clump, pine cone or weed stem and pry seeds loose with their finely pointed bills.

Siskins are gregarious when feeding, often moving in tight flocks mixed with redpolls and American goldfinches, twittering incessantly to each other. Mineral deposits can lure them to otherwise unattractive habitats like winter roads beds that are salted to melt snow and ice.

The Pine Siskin generally will nest in open coniferous or mixed forests, but will also inhabit parks, cemeteries and suburban woodlands where they breed in ornamentals conifers or deciduous trees.

The nest site is well hidden, often in a conifer on a horizontal branch typically 10 to 40 feet above the ground. The nest is a shallow cup constructed of twigs, grass, strips of bark, rootlets; and lined with moss, animal hair and feathers. The nests are highly insulated and to keep the eggs warm, the female broods constantly with the male feeding her.

Siskins nest in loose colonies or isolated pairs. Courtship and pair formation may begin in winter flocks. Males display by flying in circles above the female with wings and tail widely spread. He sings while he displays with rapidly fluttering wings. On sunny days as the male spreads his wings and tail his feathers turn to brilliant gold in a display known as the “butterfly flight.”

The female lays three to four eggs and incubation lasts about 13 days. The young leave the nest 13 to 17 days after hatching and the parents continue to feed the young for about three more weeks.

Listen for the distinctive harsh “watch-winding” call of this species, also likened to the sound of slowly tearing a sheet of paper in half. The most common siskin call is a buzzy rising zreeeee. Their song is a lengthy jumble of trills and whistles.

The Pine Siskin has a conservation status of “Least Concern.” But habitat loss has led to a population decline in the West and fragmented forest has allowed more contact with Brown-headed Cowbirds, a nest parasite.

It's most common predators are cats at backyard feeders, red squirrels that feed on nesting adults and eggs or young. Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks have also been known to predate on them. The oldest recorded Pine Siskin was at least eight years, eight months old when found in Michigan in 1966. It had been banded in Pennsylvania in 1958.

To dig more deeply:


**Diana Hierlmeier**, her husband, two dogs and an indoor cat enjoy an acre of farmland in Random Lake that is a certified Wildlife Habitat and an Advanced Bird Habitat through the National Wildlife Federation.
Chan Robbins, friend to birds and birdwatchers, dies at 98

By EMILY LANGER
Washington Post

There were many days when Chandler Robbins rose before the sun to partake of the dawn chorus — the gentle coo of the mourning Dove, the dulcet strain of the American Robin, the fluting of the Wood Thrush, all heralding the arrival of morning.

Among fellow birdwatchers, Robbins, who died March 20 at 98 in Columbia, Md., hospital of congestive heart failure and other ailments, was revered as a father of modern ornithology. Chan, as he was known to everyone, was principal author of “Birds of North America: A Guide to Field Identification,” a bible for millions of birding enthusiasts.

Robbins documented avian life around the world, including on the Pacific island of Midway, where in 1956 he tagged a young Laysan albatross who came to be known as Wisdom. She is the oldest known wild bird, a matriarch who laid an egg as recently as December.

But for more than six decades, he worked primarily as an ornithologist at the Patuxent Research Refuge in Laurel, Md. In the 1950s, he documented the damage wrought by the pesticide DDT, including its thinning effect on osprey and eagle eggs. Rachel Carson, a colleague at the time, relied on his research for her 1962 environmental manifesto “Silent Spring.”

An early champion of citizen science, Robbins founded the North American Breeding Bird Survey, an initiative that has grown since its founding in 1965 to involve thousands of volunteer birders in an annual effort of exacting rigor to measure the continental bird population. It is one of the two most significant avian monitoring programs of its kind. Robbins participated in the other, the National Audubon Society’s Christmas Bird Count, for more than 80 years, said its director, Geoff LeBaron.

“It is not an exaggeration at all to call him one of the giants of 20th century ornithology and bird conservation,” John Fitzpatrick, director of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology in Ithaca, N.Y., said in an interview.

Robbins said that his first conscious memory was of a display of mounted birds at the library in Belmont, Mass., where he was born Chandler Seymour Robbins on July 17, 1918. His father was a birder, and Chandler’s brother Sam also grew up to be a noted ornithologist. (Sam was the author of Wisconsin Birdlife, which when published in 1991 was the most comprehensive source of information on the status and distribution of birds in Wisconsin. Sam, who edited The Passenger Pigeon, quarterly journal of WSO, from 1953 to 1969, died in 2000.)

Chandler received a bachelor’s degree in physics from Harvard in 1940 and a master’s degree in zoology from George Washington University. He declared himself a conscientious objector during World War II and joined the Civilian Public Service, work that eventually brought him to the Patuxent Research Refuge. After retiring in 2005, he continued field research until shortly before his death.

He was senior editor of the “Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Maryland and the District of Columbia” but was most celebrated for his North American guide, first published in 1966 and known colloquially as the Golden Guide for the publishing series. Unlike predecessor guides, the book included a wealth of color images as well as maps of each bird’s breeding ground and migration path and a sonogram, or visual representation of its call.

His name did not appear on the cover. “The astonishing thing about him is how modest he was,” said Laura Erickson, an author of birding books including National Geographic’s “Pocket Guide to the Birds of North America” and host of the radio show “For the Birds.”

“Every single bird field guide, just about, has the name of the author embedded in the title — the Sibley guide, the Crossley guide, the Kaufman guide,” she added. “He never wanted that kind of acclaim. In everything he did, he was the consummate government worker, working as part of a team and doing his darndest to make sure all the work was absolutely scientifically straightforward and honest.”

Fitzpatrick described the Breeding Bird Survey as “the gold standard,” a “piece of genius... long before people were thinking very deeply about population trends.”

The survey allowed Robbins to draw attention to forest fragmentation caused by road construction and other development. He showed that when a forest is fragmented, species that dwell on the forest edge tend to grow, while those that thrive in the interior tend to decline.

Robbins was an unfancy man, turning down new binoculars in favor of the government-issue pair that had served him well for years. As he aged, he consented to one new device — a set of hearing aids. “I don’t want to hear people as much as I want to hear birds,” he told an interviewer for the Audubon Society.

He was credited with tagging over 115,000 birds but named his favorite as the House Wren, a plain brown creature that he loved, he told the Baltimore Sun, for its “amazingly high-pitched and intricate song.”

Scientists note widespread declines, need for landbird conservation

By Partners in Flight

A new analysis of the population status and trends of all landbirds in the continental U.S. and Canada documents widespread declines among 450 bird species — a troubling indicator of the health of these species and their ecosystems.

Nearly 20% of U.S. and Canadian landbird species are on a path towards endangerment and extinction in the absence of conservation action, according to the Partners in Flight (PIF) 2016 Landbird Conservation Plan Revision. PIF estimates that breeding landbird populations have been reduced by over a billion individuals since 1970.

Among 86 Watch List species — landbirds of highest conservation concern — 22 already have lost at least half of their population in the last 40 years and are projected to lose an additional 50% of their current population within the next 40 years. For at least six species, this “half-life” window is less than 20 years.

Fortunately, the new bird conservation landscape includes unique private-public partnerships, such as Migratory Bird Joint Ventures, that stretch across the U.S., and parts of Canada and Mexico and pool together resources and leverage funding to conserve habitat for all bird species. Such partnerships can help implement coopera-
The revenue estimate under current dues was $31,380. While this indicates that overall target expenses are being covered, further analysis showed insufficient revenues at the Single, Student and Senior membership levels for those that receive paper newsletters, as well as Students receiving the electronic newsletter.

**Revised Revenue Target**

The board’s analysis also showed that the expenses included in its current revenue target did not adequately reflect the costs of WSO’s core membership operations. The board concluded that it was appropriate to include these additional expenses in a revised revenue target:

- **Color printing for The Passenger Pigeon,** $6,128
- **Brochure costs,** $500
- **Website costs,** $2,786
- **Administration,** $5,017

These would add $14,421 to the target expenses, for a total of $41,523. The revenues generated by WSO’s existing dues levels fall short of this revised target by about $10,000.

**Proposed Dues Structure**

To solve both the revenue shortfall under some of the existing membership classes, along with the extensive overall revenue shortfall under the more comprehensive revenue target, the board is proposing to update both the membership class structure and our annual dues. The proposed new membership classes and dues levels are shown below in Table 2.

Under this proposal, overall dues would increase to $44,690, compared with $31,380 from existing dues levels. This would adequately cover the revised revenue target of $41,523.

**Summary of Major Changes**

“Single” and “Family” classes would be combined into one “Household” class

A $10 surcharge would be implemented for anyone wishing to receive mailed paper copies of The Badger Birder, reflecting the additional printing and postage costs involved compared with electronic delivery of the eBirder.

A new “Conservation Advocate” class would combine a “Sustaining” membership with an additional $100 contribution to WSO’s Conservation Fund. This is designed to help WSO implement a key focus identified in its 2015 strategic planning survey.

“Life” and “Patron” classes would no longer be available to new members, but current “Life” and “Patron” memberships would be continued without any changes in benefits.

Expanding the range of costs to be included in the revenue target to be covered by regular membership dues.

Overall, the board concluded that a dues increase was a reasonable solution given:

1) The increasing quality and amount of information and services the Society is providing through its publications and website; and

2) The extraordinary length of time (16 years) since the last dues increase.

These two tables compare current and proposed membership levels and dues:

**Table 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membership Level</th>
<th>Current Dues</th>
<th>Proposed Dues</th>
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<tr>
<td>Student</td>
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<tr>
<td>Single</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Life – Single</td>
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<tr>
<td>Life – Couple</td>
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<td>$800</td>
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<td>Patron</td>
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<td>$35 domestic/$45 foreign</td>
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**Table 2**

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<th>Rate (e-BB)</th>
<th>Rate (paper-BB)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Student</td>
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<td>$35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Household</td>
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<td>$110</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conservation advocate</td>
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<td>$210</td>
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<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>$35 domestic/$45 foreign</td>
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FIELD TRIP

60+ species on Mead field trip, including 15 Prairie-Chickens

By Myles Hurlburt

We had another beautiful weather day for the George W. Mead Wildlife Area field trip on April 8. This was a week earlier than last year’s WSO trip, and it was a bit cooler but with light winds.

Right from the get-go, the area was teaming with life. As our 25+ people were gathering at our meeting location at the “old” wildlife headquarters building we could hear the Greater Prairie-Chickens booming on the only known lek in Marathon County.

First stop was County Line Road where we expected to see the few remaining prairie-chickens in the county. As the car caravan arrived, we were all rewarded with awesome views. The lighting was fabulous.

As is typical for this time of year, the males were fighting, strutting their stuff, to win the favor of the females. We had a total of 15 birds, with two of those being females.

From there, we traveled to Smokey Hill Road and stopped at the viewing platform on South Rice Lake. While with the naked eye one would suspect there to be no life at all -- as things seemed so quiet and still, peaceful even. But when we used our binoculars and spotting scopes we could see lots of activity on the back side of the lake. At this stop we recorded a total of 32 species. Highlights were a pair of Trumpeter Swans, 16 species of waterfowl and a Hermit Thrush.

Next, we headed over to Rangeline Road for a leisurely walk on the wooded trail before viewing the lake. This stop afforded us many great views of Brown creepers, a few Yellow-rumped Warblers and Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers and Golden-crowned Kinglets.

Our last stop was back at the Mead Wildlife Area headquarters where we walked the trail behind the headquarters building.

We ended the morning tallying 60+ species. It was a beautiful, almost perfect day with an awesome group of people. We’d love to attract and encourage more people to just get out and explore their world. There is so much life and beauty out there. All we have to do is look, see and enjoy! People enjoying nature.

WSO’s annual field trip to the George W. Mead Wildlife Area was a day to enjoy nature and 60+ bird species, including some of the few remaining Greater Prairie-Chickens in Marathon County.

Partnerships needed to protect landbirds

From Page 20

tive strategies found within the Landbird Conservation Plan Revision to restore habitats and reverse bird population declines at the continental scale over the next decade and beyond.

“Only by investing in strong, diverse partnerships throughout the hemisphere and in the public, private, and industrial sectors, can we effectively create a sustainable landscape for all landbirds that breed, winter, and migrate through North America,” said PIF coordinator Robert Ford.

PIF updates website

Partners in Flight has revised and updated its website. The URL hasn’t changed – it is still www.partnersinflight.org – but it has a new look and in-depth information on current science and conservation activities across its landbird network. It builds upon and adds to the content many found useful from the old PIF site.

The updated site continues to serve as the online home of the 2016 PIF Landbird Conservation Plan. It now also provides improved access to a wealth of landbird conservation resources and invites people to get engaged in PIF’s mission of helping species at risk and keeping common birds common.

Some key features include a Resource Library, links to PIF Databases and PIF Technical Series, working group pages, and sections describing how PIF promotes and implements landbird conservation. The site hosts an events calendar and blog posts for sharing the latest news in landbird conservation. You can sign up for regular updates from PIF.

PIF is a network of 150+ organizations throughout the Western Hemisphere engaged in all aspects of landbird conservation from science, research, planning and policy development to land management, monitoring, education and outreach.

PIF’s proactive mission: Keeping common birds common and helping species at risk through voluntary partnerships. Its goal is to halt and reverse bird population declines before species are listed as threatened or endangered -- a cost effective business model.
April was a month of outstanding state rarities

By Mark Korducki

It was a fairly warm month and spring migration progressed a bit ahead of schedule. Some outstanding rarities were discovered and a few of them were quite cooperative.

The best bird of the month was a Prairie Falcon in Kenosha. This species has only been reported about five times in the state and this was the first one that remained long enough to chase. It proved difficult to find but remained around for at least three days and several persistent observers were able to add it to their state lists.

At the beginning of the month geese were being seen in unprecedented numbers across the state. Flocks of over 1,000 Snow and Greater White-fronted Geese were found in the south central part of the state along with dozens of Ross’s Geese.

A photo of a large concentration of geese at Goose Pond in Columbia County was posted online. A sharp eyed individual noticed that this photo contained a Brant. Word quickly got out and the chase was on. Fortunately the Brant remained in the area for over a week and was enjoyed by many.

It was also a good month for Eurasian Wigeon. The first report of a drake came from Brown County and was quickly followed by birds in Bayfield and Outagamie.

Shorebird migration is progressing about schedule and was highlighted by a Ruff in Manitowoc. Black-necked Stilts continue to be seen in Wisconsin with greater frequency. Single birds were seen away from their typical locations in Kenosha and Manitowoc.

Small flocks of American Avocets in full breeding plumage are always a treat along the Lake Michigan shoreline in spring. This happened in both Milwaukee and Racine. Piping Plovers are slowly making a comeback in the Great Lakes region and early sightings were reported from Manitowoc and Racine.

A Cattle Egret in late March was quite early and at an unusual location in a Milwaukee park. White-faced Ibis were exciting discoveries in Dane and Fond du Lac. A Western Grebe was found in the Kewaunee Harbor along with an Eared Grebe. Eared Grebes also were found in Milwaukee and Ozaukee.

Passerine migration was a bit ahead of schedule with the warmer weather pattern. At least 10 species of warblers have already been reported, including two Yellow-throated Warblers in their traditional Grant County location. A White-eyed Vireo in Milwaukee was unusually early. Another was far north of normal in Marathon. Northern Mockingbirds were found right on the lakeshore in Milwaukee and Racine. A Loggerhead Shrike in Iowa County may have been nest building. In Monroe County, Smith’s Longspurs were found in an area closed to the public.

It was an outstanding start to spring migration. Let’s hope May has many surprises in store.

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In addition to compiling this monthly report, Mark Korducki coordinates Wisconsin’s 92 Breeding Bird Survey routes.

1st Bald Eagle nest documented in Kenosha County

Wisconsin DNR

Madison -- Kenosha County has its first documented active bald eagle nest in 45 years of surveying, bringing to 70 the number of Wisconsin counties where the nation’s symbol has made a comeback.

The discovery leaves Milwaukee and Walworth counties as the only remaining counties with no confirmed active bald eagle nests, but conservation biologists believe it is only a matter of time before the nation’s symbol sets up housekeeping there too.

“It’s great to see the continued expansion of their range and the numbers of nests continuing to rise,” says Department of Natural Resources conservation biologist Sharon Fandel, who confirmed the Bald Eagle nest in late March after receiving a call from a landowner.

She drove to Kenosha County and used a spotting scope to identify a Bald Eagle incubating on a nest in a large tree along the edge of an agricultural field.

Bald Eagle populations have gradually recovered in Wisconsin and nationally as a result of the banning of the pesticide DDT nationally in 1972 (and in Wisconsin in 1969), a prohibition on killing of eagles, improved water quality in lakes and rivers, nest protection, and reintroduction of eagles in some areas. Bald eagles were removed from Wisconsin’s endangered species list in 1997 and from the federal list in 2007.

Wisconsin aerial surveys in 2016 confirmed 1,504 occupied eagle nests, nearly 15 times as many as the 108 documented nests found in the 1970s. Aerial surveys to determine if nests are occupied are underway now for 2017 and results will be compiled later this spring.

People who see an active Bald Eagle nest, with adults incubating eggs or exhibiting other breeding behaviors, are encouraged to report their 2017 observations through the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas.

Wisconsin residents can celebrate and contribute to the continuing comeback of bald eagles and rare species by buying a Bald Eagle license plate sales and donations to the Endangered Resources Fund are a critical source of funding for work by DNR’s Natural Heritage Conservation staff with endangered species and natural areas.

The $25 annual donation to keep the plate helps fund work including the Bald Eagle nest occupancy survey, which is one of the longest running surveys of its kind in North America and provides important information to help monitor eagle populations and protect nests.

Jennifer Ambrose, who lives in Milwaukee and blogs at http://www.birdspazz.com, photographed this Prairie Falcon at Bong State Recreation Area in Kenosha County. It was a lifer for her – and others.
WSO CALENDAR

Field Trips

May 6 (Saturday) White River Marsh -- For early dawn chorus of woodcock, snipe, rails, cranes, etc. meet at 5 a.m. at parking lot by cattail marsh along White River Rd., 4.3 miles east of Hwy. D, north of Princeton in Green Lake County. We have heard Yellow Rail on several occasions. If you don’t want to arrive that early, group will probably be along this road until 8 a.m. Bring a lunch.

May 27 (Saturday) Young Birders at White River Marsh -- Contact Ryan Treves at ryanstreves@gmail.com. This event is for YOUNG BIRDERS ONLY -- age 19 and younger, and chaperones; you MUST pre-register to attend! Meet at 7 a.m. for joint outing with Wisconsin Young Birders Club. Possibilities include rails, bitterns, cuckoos, Acadian Flycatcher, Cerulean Warbler and Henslow’s Sparrow. Bring a lunch.

June 3 (Saturday) Kettle Moraine - Northern Unit -- Meet at 6: a.m. at Mauthe Lake Recreation Area, at first large parking area beyond ticket booth, on main road to beach/picnic area. There is a state park entrance fee. Bring good walking shoes, because there will be quite a little hiking, though leisurely. Most trails are well groomed. Notable species include Red-shouldered and Broad-winged Hawks, Pileated Woodpecker, Acadian, Alder and Willow Flycatchers, 10-15 warbler species including Mourning, Canada, Hooded, Pine and Cerulean Warblers, as well as Grasshopper, Henslow’s and Clay-colored Sparrows. Bring a bag lunch.

Complete 2017 field trip schedule was published in the January issue of The Badger Birder and appears online at http://wsobirds.org/what-we-do/field-trips

Honey Creek Birdathon/Bandathon

May 13-14 (Saturday-Sunday) at Honey Creek

Harold and Carla Kruse Nature Preserve at Honey Creek in Sauk County. Banding will be conducted Saturday, weather permitting. On Sunday, arrive by 8 a.m. to join other WSO birders in fundraising Birdathon that will include a hike up Honey Creek valley. For more information and to pledge, go to https://wsobirds.org/honey-creek-birdathon-bandathon-2. Camping facilities are available. Go west out of Prairie du Sac on Hwy PF approximately 15 miles to Skyview Dr. Turn left and travel 3/4 mile to Alder Drive. Turn left and continue to Cox Nature Center.

WSO Membership Application or Renewal

Name ________________________________
Address ________________________________
City/State/Zip __________________________
Phone ( ) ____________________________
E-mail ________________________________

Make check payable to WSO and send with form to address below

WSO Membership PO Box 3024 Madison, WI 53704-3024